

Since He Faced Denial for US!

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[0:00] Please take your Bibles and go to Matthew's Gospel, Matthew chapter 26, Matthew chapter 26. If you need a Bible, there's a Bible in the chair, black Bible in the chair in front of you.

Go to the back, to the New Testament part and find page 24, page 24 to find Matthew chapter 26. We're going to read verses 69 to 75 this morning, 69 to 75 for our study. Again, Matthew chapter 26, starting in verse 69.

Let's read. And Peter sat outside in the courtyard and a certain servant girl coming to him said, You also were with Jesus the Galilean.

He denied before all, saying, I don't know what you're saying. And going out to the gateway, another saw him and said to those there, this one was with Jesus of Nazareth.

[1:18] Again, he denied with an oath. I don't know the man. And a little later, the bystanders came up and said to Peter, truly, you are of them for how you speak makes it plain.

Then he began to curse and swear, I do not know the man. And immediately a cock crowed. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus when he said, before a cock crows, three times you will deny me.

And going out, he wept bitterly. In the European Journal of American Studies, spring of 2014, there was an article titled, The Ideology of Climate Change Denial in the United States, by Jean-Daniel Colombe.

I think he's French. I don't know. He said this in an introduction. It was like a 12-page thing, a short little thing that he wrote. He said this in the introduction, quote, The concerted effort to discredit the scientific consensus over man-made global warming has been continuing for two decades in the United States and shows no sign of weakening.

It is very often described as an attempt on the part of corporate America, most notably the fossil fuel industries, to hinder governmental regulations on their activities.

[2:54] While emphasizing this dimension of the U.S. climate denial movement, this article also aims to show the complexity of the movement rather than the mere defense of the narrowly defined and short-term economic interests of the oil and gas industries by shedding light on two additional factors which have been instrumental in blocking strong climate action.

First, climate denial stems from the strong ideological commitment of small government conservatives and libertarians to laissez-faire and their strong opposition to regulation.

Second, in order to disarm their opponents, U.S. climate deniers often rest their case on the defense of the American way of life defined by high consumption and ever-expanding material prosperity, end quote.

Interesting. And I found interesting most about phraseology. Climate change denial.

So the assumption is climate change, that's true. So if you're denying that, that's true. And you're denying that what's already true. Again, no one actually says climate change is not true.

[4:12] They just don't believe it's primarily man-made. But denier, again, that phrase, climate change denier, so you're saying that's, climate change is true, so you deny it because it's already true.

Get it? See how the phrase, the words of what he's saying? Well, that's a matter of debate. Versus, say, holocaust denier.

Yes, there are actually people, specifically in, actually, country like Iran, they are holocaust deniers. They actually believe that the holocausts where six million Jews were murdered and genocide, that that is a hoax, an exaggeration.

I mean, seriously, I mean, it's striking you just Google that and you'll find all sorts of things about holocaust deniers. I mean, that's true.

And to truly say you deny that, that's really true. There's no debate about that. And today we see the worst denial in human history.

[5:44] Don't we? One of the most well-loved, highly respected disciple of Jesus, denying him three times.

And still, Matthew's driving force of his gospel calling his readers, even more specific Jewish Christians, to bow down, worship Jesus.

He's the Messiah, the Son of God, the King of Israel, the Judge of the world. And today, we bow down, worship Jesus since he faced denial for us. Remember, we've been looking at that sub-theme of, as Jesus began to start the passion where he would suffer on our behalf, we begin to see the different things he began to face for us.

First, betrayal. Then we looked at how he faced this injustice, accused, falsely accused.

And then he faced this humiliation, which he didn't deserve. And today, denial. He faced denial for us.

[7:08] Jesus faced denial for us where we should be left all alone. Where we should have been stabbed in the back because we rightly deserved it.

Given our sinful response to God and his word, Jesus took that for us. Or make it personal. Jesus took that for me.

For me. The idea of, as a substitute, on your behalf, Christian. On your behalf, follower of Jesus. Where we should stand alone. With no one with us. Where we should be left to ourselves. Jesus took it for us.

So that we can have the complete affirmation of the Father. The Father loves, approves, and embraces us.

[8:19] Where the Father should deny us, he directed that all towards his Son. There's the idea. There's the biblical concept of substitution.

Where the Father should deny you, he directed that to Jesus. So that you can be loved.

So that you can have his approval. So that you can be embraced by the Father. And he will love you. Jesus took the shame of us denying him upon himself.

As Christ hung on the cross, he took that shame. So that we can be given honor, grace, esteem, and dignity from the Father. For all those who turn from their sin, they repent and they trust in Jesus Christ alone.

So that's a message for you if you're here, you don't know Jesus. You're not a Christian. You should repent. You should trust Christ. All that will be placed upon Jesus.

[9:32] And you come to a place where you say, Jesus, you took that all from me. Father, you placed that upon Jesus. For me, I put my trust in him. He's the only person who can save me. From your just judgment.

That's the gospel. One of the saddest true stories in the whole Bible is before us.

And it impacts us to the core, right in your gut. As we watch the ringleader of the disciples flat out deny his Lord three times.

But yet fulfilling the prophecy that Jesus himself proclaimed. It's striking. We'll look at this a little bit more later.

Striking, amazing to see the contrast between Jesus' trial and Peter's. Trial. Jesus confessed who he truly was.

[10:43] Peter denied it all. Three accusations came against Peter. And then he gave three denials. Which increased with intensity the last denial with oaths and expletives.

Another striking contrast. He was called first and yet the last to leave. And then realizing what he had done. What Jesus had said.

He quickly left to weep bitterly. He was so broken over what he had done. It is amazing that we see this at all in the Bible.

You realize that, right? Something recorded in all four gospels. And Matthew just gives us just kind of like the highlights. Which is typical of Matthew.

He just doesn't worry about details. Mark gives us more details. Gives us quick rendition. Luke gives us more.

[11:50] And John, for Peter's denials, gives us more. That there was timing between the first and the second and the third. But this recording of Peter's denials, it gives more evidence that the Bible is God's word.

You know what the great part about the Bible is? It shows its heroes are weak. Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Peter.

Which is evidence to its very authority, inerrancy, and sufficiency. It just shows who we are in spades, man.

It doesn't hold back. It just shows how evil we are from Genesis 3, even to here. It doesn't hold back.

It shows God, though, dealing with weak Christ deniers. And that's His grace.

[13:07] He's involved. If we're faithless, He remains faithful because He cannot deny Himself. You remember the times where you've been faithless?

You can have such great confidence because people, we are weak and vulnerable. All of us are. We lack trusting God.

And yet, this is why, really, this passage gives us such great hope and encouragement. And we're going to see that a little bit later on in the message. So let's work through these sad verses.

This sad, yet true, denial, number one, verse 69 to 70. And Peter sat outside in the courtyard and a certain servant girl came to him and said, you also were Jesus the Galilean.

Notice, it's not from a leader, not from a person on the council, not even a bystander. First, this accusation came from a powerless servant girl.

[14:24] And I'm not trying to demean anybody here, but in the first century, a slave girl was nothing. And she accused Peter of being with Jesus.

Notice, how he brushed it off. Verse 70, denied before all, saying, I don't know what you're saying. He ambiguously, denied Jesus.

Evaded the question. I don't know what you're talking about. Refused to identify himself with Jesus, one writer says. He covertly denied he knew Jesus at all.

Quickly, again, next one, denial number two, 71, 72. Going out to the gateway, another saw him. Instead of those there, this one was with Jesus of Nazareth.

Another servant. Again, nobody of great status told the bystanders around that he was with Jesus in Nazareth.

[15:38] Now, Peter flat out denied it with an oath. Again, he denied verse 72 with an oath. I don't know the man.

Basically, he says this, I swear to God, I don't know the man. I swear to God, I swear to God, I swear to God, I swear to God, so he not only lied, but he perjured himself.

He put himself under an oath. Flat out denied it with an oath, calling God to be his witness.

As God is my witness, I swear to God, I don't know the man. And then denial number three, 73 to 74. A little later, bystanders coming up, they said to Peter, truly, you are one of them, it says here, numeric standard, for the way you talk gives you a way, literally, for the way, for your speech makes it clear, or plain.

Someone else besides the servant girl, cues Peter. No. Given his Galilean accent, his different dialect to them, gave away that he was one of Jesus' disciples.

[16:58] Notice, Peter became desperate, and freaked out. He truly flat out denied Jesus, knowing Jesus, with strong curses and oaths.

The idea might be like this, may God strike me down, and punish me, if I'm lying, and what I'm saying is untrue. Oh.

And he may have used expletives, as a way to emphasize his point. Foul filth, foul foul filth. I don't know the man.

Which leads us to our next point, the sad remembrance, verse 74. Immediately a cock crowed. Right then a rooster crows, which was a painful, piercing reminder to Peter, of Jesus' prophetic prediction.

Again, we keep running into this. Matthew likes to bring this sub-theme up, in his gospel. The amazing truth of God's sovereignty, and our culpability.

[18:18] God's sovereign. Man plans his ways, but the Lord is the one, who directs our steps. That's so true.

He remembered the word of Jesus, when he said, before a cock crows, three times you will deny me. The one who had just boasted, who had boasted just a few hours ago, that he would never deny Jesus, but would die with him, had just denied him three times.

Remember that? Remember just a few hours ago? A few weeks ago. He caved into pressure, from those who were less important.

Which leads to severe sorrow. Verse 75, Going out, he wept bitterly. He was grief stricken, and grief stricken over his sin, he left and wept bitterly, over what he had done.

He blew it big time, and he knew it. Talk about the great shame.

[19 : 39] You know, what's interesting is, this is the last time, that Matthew mentions Peter by name. And you see him, he's brought up holistically, in Matthew chapter 28, with the 11.

So, I mean, the assumption, because you find out what happens to Judas, so he's there, but in terms of by name, you don't see Peter named again. So there it is.

Another, weak response, from one of the disciples of Christ. We've been looking at this, right? How long have we been in Matthew's gospel? And we've been looking at the disciples, and you just kind of go, man, these guys are like boneheads.

What's the matter with you guys? Nothing like us. But this time, it was huge. Denying Jesus three times. I mean, there's, there's an air, this morning, of sadness, being somber over, what we've looked at from scripture.

I mentioned this earlier, the irony between Jesus and Peter. So I want to, I want to bring this out a little bit more. Jesus confessed his identity to the supreme religious leader of Israel.

[21 : 13] Remember that last week? Peter denied knowing Jesus before a no-name servant girl and just some bystanders. I mean, maybe they were temple guards, but really they were nobodies.

In terms of in that time period, first century. You see this contrast. It could not be displayed any greater. And again, the response is great sadness.

It's heartbreaking to see this happen with one of the greatest Christ followers. And yet, there's light at the end of the tunnel.

It actually gives us great hope and encouragement. How so? It encourages us because if Peter found grace, mercy, and forgiveness for what he had done, how much more us?

How much more you, Christian? if Peter was given grace, how much more will you be given grace?

[22 : 36] And we can be confident that only in the Lord Jesus we're given grace and mercy by God. we can be confident of that.

That gives us hope in the midst of a horrible passage and a sad, sorrowful group of verses so that our first response really is exciting hope.

Oh, it's not hopeless when we face, oh wait, what is that? No, no, no, no. Oh, exciting hope, sorry. Exciting hope. What a thrill we can be forgiven. What great encouragement in spite of us.

God in Christ Jesus will forgive us, renew us, restore us, and grow us into Christ. That's what I wanted to say. I mean, you can be excited in the midst of this. In spite of you, God will forgive you, he will renew you, he'll restore you, and he'll grow you.

And this was the other thing I wanted to point out. It's not hopeless for us when faced with similar temptations and struggles. It's not hopeless. Don't think that it is.

[23 : 59] God's grace comes and gives us strength to persevere. God's grace comes and gives us hope to see God You know, it's a good thing that Jesus loves his body more than you do.

Do you know that? Jesus loves his people way more than you do.

Jesus loves us. The Father loves the body of Christ because we're united to his Son. We've talked about this before from John's Gospel.

The Father loves us just as much as he loves his Son. Dwell on that. Think through that. If that's true, you read something like this, it gives you such great hope.

Jesus loves his body more than you do. Jesus loves his body more than I do as your pastor. So this gives us a great hope and encouragement.

[25 : 12] Yet, it also serves as a warning because if Peter, of all the followers of Jesus, was susceptible to fall in this way, then so can you.

We are weak and vulnerable. You know, this horrifies us when we see it. But what should horrify us even more is that we are also susceptible.

So it's a warning as well. But here's the encouragement that comes in.

May it cause us to be diligent to pursue holiness on a personal level and a corporate level that we would keep filling our minds with truth and connecting with this local body two means of grace by which we grow and stay faithful to our Lord.

Be diligent to pursue godliness and holiness in your life. Fill your minds with the truth on an individual personal level but connecting with each other in the body of Christ.

[26:38] God's grace. These are the two means of grace that God has given us so that you can grow, so you can stay faithful and encourage you in that.

Encourage us towards body life, connecting with each other as God's people. That's important because it's one of the ways in Scripture by which you grow and this doesn't mean that if you're not a part of a local body that you won't grow because you will but it won't be as much as if you're in a body within a local church.

It's so vital. These are means of grace that God has given to us on a personal level and a corporate level. As Christ hung on the cross, he took shame for us.

Jesus took the shame of us denying him upon himself. So we're given grace. So we're given honor. We're given esteem. Dignity from the Father. We're given to that as his people. We get grace. Or we should stand alone with no one else with us, only left to ourselves.

[28:02] Jesus took it for us so we can have the complete affirmation of the Father. The Father loves, approves, and embraces us. Where the Father should deny you, he directed that towards his Son.

Jesus faced denial for us where we should be left all alone, where we should have been stabbed in the back because we rightly deserve it given our sinful response to God in his word.

Jesus took it for us. I'm going to leave you with that, not to leave you with the sadness of looking at this badge and go, oh, this is horrible.

And it is. And yet there's such hope here. Don't miss that. The songs I chose after the message were chosen on purpose as ways for you to renew your love for Christ but also to remind yourself of how much he loves you as his own.

Would you pray with me? Lord Jesus, we renew our love for you and in the midst of a sad passage that's so somber, it's weighty, it can be discouraging and hopeless.

[29:49] We find hope, encouragement, and thrilling joy that Father, where where you should have denied us, you directed that to your son.

He was our substitute. So you love us. You embrace us. Father, we pray by your spirit that we would fill our minds with the truth of your word and we would allow ourselves to get more connected with each other because as we connect with your body, Jesus, those are ways where we remind ourselves of gospel truth.

Father, we pray pursuing holiness not to get your approval but because we have it and you love us and we love you.

Rekindle our love for you as we will sing I give you my heart I give you my soul that you're our greatest treasure may that come from deep inside us we pray may it affect our thoughts words and actions today this week as your people I encourage you to just take these few moments these few moments of silence between you and the Lord and let your mind dwell on these things the truth of God's word fill your mind with truth and and the encouragement in the midst of sadness of the gospel and then we will respond by singing just a few moments between you and the Lord and the Lord